

ATHENA'S TABLET



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Ryan Peck, First Officer

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Communications Officer



Official Newsletter of the Starfleet Command Ship USS Athena

Athena Crewmen Lisa Boswell and Joe Waltz to Marry

By Lisa Boswell

In 2023, I attended my first Starbase Indy by myself. I was hoping to meet Star Trek fans to be friends with.

Saturday evening I was at Dinner With the Stars dressed as Captain Pike from Strange New Worlds; Joe was dressed as Admiral Picard. He approached me to compliment my costume and my amazing "Pike's Peak". We talked for a bit, but since Joe is a social butterfly, he drifted off to talk to other people. But he kept coming back to talk more.

Eventually I migrated to the bar and Joe found me there. We continued to talk the rest of the evening. Joe, the extrovert, told me his life story in those couple of hours. I mostly listened, like the introvert I am. We exchanged socials and agreed to meet up again on Sunday. We hung out a few hours on Sunday before parting ways.

With Joe living in Indianapolis and me living in Independence, KY, a true relationship didn't develop for a few months. We finally started dating long distance and realized we were sooo compatible! It wasn't long before Joe moved to KY and soon after that we were engaged. Since SBI is where we met, how perfect for us to get married there!



Lisa Boswell, Anson Mount, and
Joe Waltz at Louisville PopCon 2024

Starfleet Command

Starfleet Command is an international non-profit group of Star Trek, Science Fiction and Space Enthusiasts and is one of the oldest Star Trek fan clubs in the world. Originally founded in the United States in 1974, the club is patterned after the Starfleet Command organization as seen in the Star Trek television series and movies.

SFC operates through units spread across the United States (Quadrant One), the United Kingdom and Europe (Quadrant Two) and Australia and Asia (Quadrant Three). Each Quadrant runs autonomously, with its own Admiralty Board and Support structure.

In Star Trek, IDIC refers to "Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations" and is a Vulcan philosophy. The phrase in Vulcan is Kol-Ut-Shan. Over the years, Star Trek fans have embraced the concept of IDIC as fans from varied and diverse cultures unite. IDIC has become an ideal worth striving for.

SFC and the USS Athena proudly support this philosophy as we believe our differences do make us stronger



Starfleet Command

Scan Code to Join Starfleet Today

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LT JG Pamela Maness
Engineering Officer
Editor-In-Chief

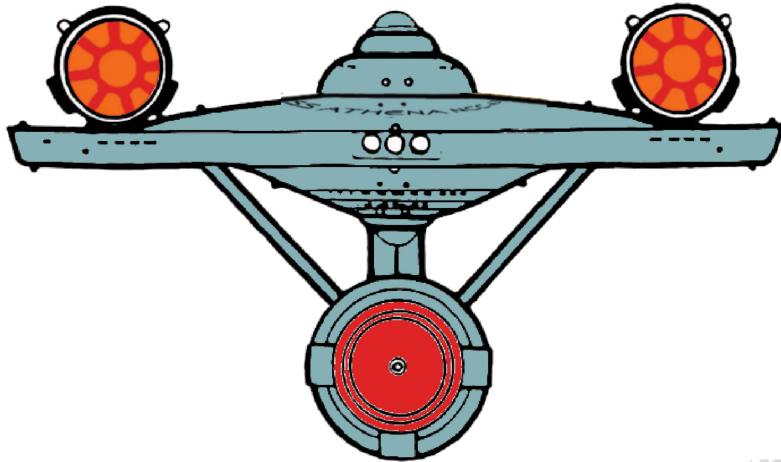
Fleet Captain Kathy Peck
USS Athena Captain
Editor

Commander Ryan Peck
First Officer, USS Athena
Editor

LT CDR. Joseph Fugate
Chief of Communications
Editor

Fleet Captain's Log

By Fleet Captain Kathy Peck
Commanding Officer, USS Athena



The USS Athena was commissioned on November 30, 2019. I formed the Athena with my husband and first officer, Commander Ryan Peck. It started out as a small ship with less than ten members, and it has now expanded to over sixty members. I am more than pleased with our growth and success.

The Athena is based in Nashville, TN, but we have members from all over the Southeast. Our first newsletter is another leap forward.

When I was a little girl watching Star Trek reruns on TV in the 1970s, I became enthralled with its message of peace and acceptance. I loved the camaraderie of the Enterprise crew. I thought it would be great to have a group of Star Trek friends to talk with about the show.

That's what's so important about the Athena—having friends that share a common interest. I am very proud to have such a strong ship with a dedicated crew.

As I sit in my Ready Room with my first officer and plan our next shipwide event—whether we are drinking coffee, Raktajinos, or Earl Gray tea—we reflect on Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom, and our ship's motto “Peace through strength and wisdom”. We are ready to serve and to uphold the ideals of Star Trek. Everyone on the ship came together through fandom, because fandom is a way of life.

Live long and prosper.



From The Bridge...



What an exciting time it is to be a member of the USS Athena! As we enter our sixth year as a club, I reflect back on our accomplishments and notice how much we have grown. We started out as a handful of fans who would gather in downtown Nashville to rewatch episodes together. Now we have expanded to a large ship that is spread out over several states and has bimonthly discussions on

Zoom, as well as being

involved in community service and other events. Many of our members are active on the convention circuit with a focus on refreshing our souls by sharing our passion for Trek.

I'm especially elated about our new "Landing Party" program. Due to the fact that many of our members live outside of the middle Tennessee area, we now have designated crew that perform group activities within the area they reside.

November is a special month for Athenians since some of us are able to converge at Starbase Indy for our annual Starfleet Command meeting. It is a time to reacquaint with old friends as well as make new ones. Having an immersive part in fandom gives us a much-needed break from the real world.

As we continue in our day to day lives, I encourage all members to consider taking the Officer's Exam.

I look forward to another year of service aboard the Athena as we unitedly press onward!

Commander Ryan Peck
First Officer, USS Athena

Greetings from Starbase 01...



Starbase 01 has been operational since stardate 250101.01. It covers ships in Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Mississippi. We currently have 15 ships assigned - including the newly christened USS Burton NCC-2025. At Starbase Indy 2024 I was asked by Admiral Tim Shell to take charge of the newly formed Starbase 01.

I started on the Athena in the Engineering Department in JUN23. Although, records show that I had actually joined in 1977 but did not renew at the time. Being an Apollo kid, I've been a sci-fi fan since early childhood - especially Star Trek. I'm from the

first of the "syndication generation". After moving from CA to TN I had a hard time finding other Trekkies. One night in 2022 The Adventure Science Center had a Star Trek Night. That is where I met Kathy and Ryan. I've been happy to have found like minded people in this group. I was happy to host an in-person Strange New Worlds Season 3 watch party and BBQ potluck. Everyone had a good time.

Please visit Starbase01 at our website
Starbase01.net

LTCDR
Phil Barnes
CO:Starbase 01

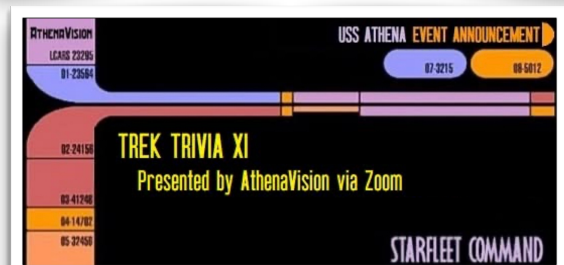


ATHENAVISION

Brief



By Lieutenant Commander Joseph Fugate,
Chief of Communications



First established in May of 2024, AthenaVision was developed to provide USS Athena members that are not local to its Nashville, Tennessee-based community a means of getting involved with the club.

It does this with monthly events, mostly using the meeting application Zoom. These events include social gatherings in our ship's lounge called The Owl and Odyssey and trivia events. The meetings in The Owl and Odyssey are open for discussions about most anything, but especially about Star Trek, The USS Athena, and our mother organization Starfleet Command. There is usually time set aside for members to show and tell any particular Star Trek items they own.

The trivia events are based on information about Star Trek's legacy series. Even if a person isn't fully knowledgeable about a specific series, answers are provided in a group effort giving participants a chance to learn more about the Star Trek franchise in general.

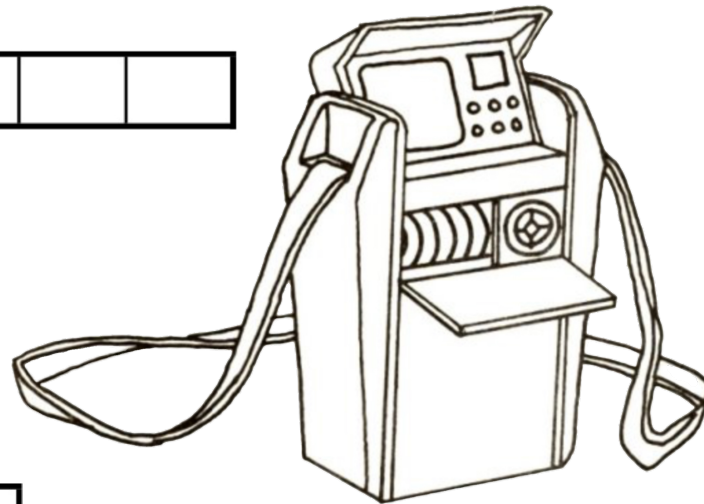
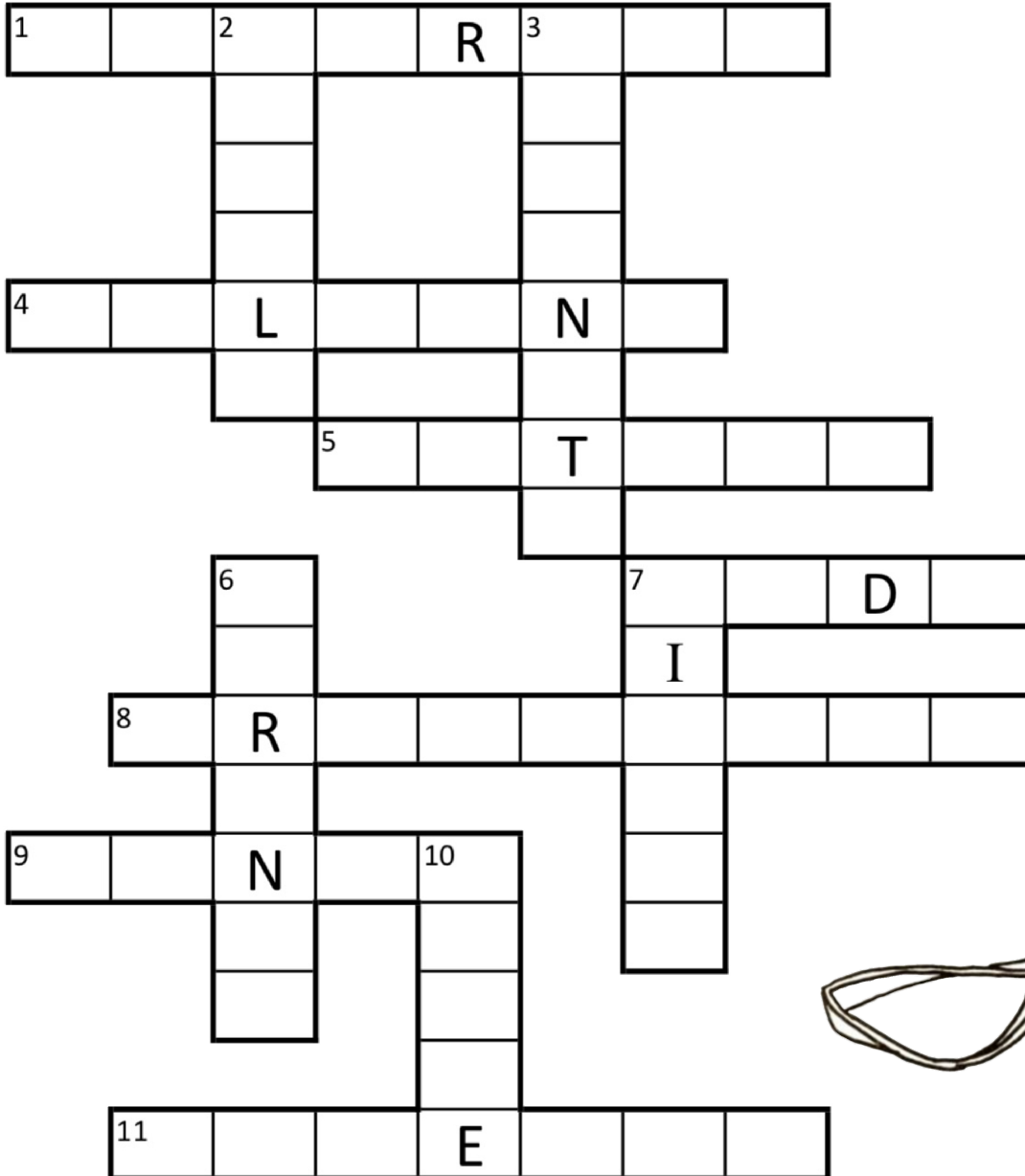
Also released monthly on YouTube is a talk show called Parthenon Particles. Hosted by AthenaVision administrator and Athena Chief of Communications Joseph Fugate, this talk show covers news about Star Trek, the Athena, and Starfleet Command, summarizes activities that Athena members have participated in, and announces coming events on the Athena's calendar. Each episode also features an interview with someone from the Athena or Starfleet Command or the Star Trek community.



STAR TREK

CROSSWORD

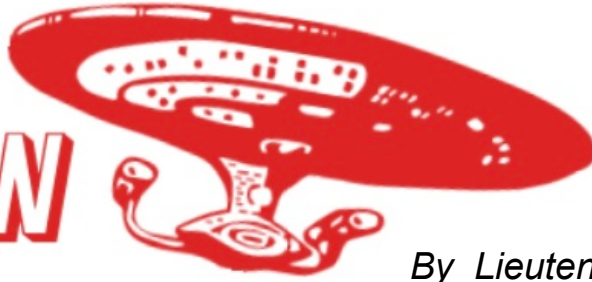
Lieutenant Commander Joseph Fugate, Chief of Communications



- 1a - JAMES _____ KIRK
 2d - TO _____ GO
 3d - _____ DIVERSITY IN INFINITE COMBINATIONS
 4a - THE LOGICAL COUSINS OF THE ROMULANS
 5a - CHARACTER GEORDI PLAYS TO DATA'S HOLMES ON HOLODECK
 6d - FOLLOWERS OF THE RULES OF ACQUISITION
 7a - DEVICE LIKE A MODERN DAY TABLET COMPUTER
 7d - COMMON ORION OCCUPATION
 8a - HANDHELD SCANNING DEVICE
 9a - KIRK'S NICKNAME FOR DR. McCOY
 10d - NOT A HOLODECK BUT A HOLO _____
 11a - FIRST HUMAN VESSEL TO ACHIEVE WARP SPEED

ANSWERS: 1a-Tiberius, 2d-Boldy,
 3d-Infinite, 4a-Vulcans, 5a-Watson,
 6d-Ferengi, 7a-PADD, 7d-Pirate,
 8a-Tricorder, 9a-Bones, 10d-Suite,
 11a-Phoenix

BOOK REVIEW



By Lieutenant JG
Stephen Willis,
Operations Officer

STAR TREK THE NEXT GENERATION

Q-IN-LAW

A Novel By Peter David

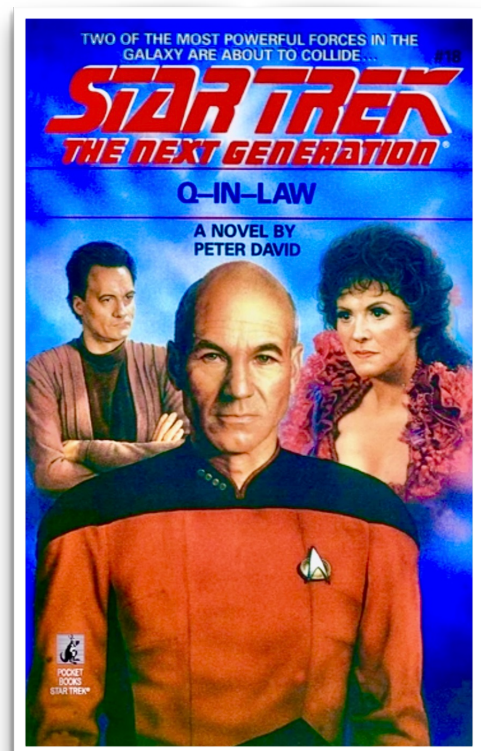
As we lost the author Peter David earlier this year, I was thinking a lot about my favorite Star Trek Book ever, which he wrote. I finally made it to his table at Dragoncon a few years ago, with my tattered and well read paperback for him to sign. As I expected, he was quite happy to see such a beat up copy. Authors so often are, because it shows them you truly loved the work, and carried it with you, and re-read it many times.

Such is the case with Q In Law. I first read this back in high school, when ST:TNG was still on tv. If you come across it, the cover just grabs you. Back then, when such covers were painted artwork, the author really grabbed the premise of the book and made it speak out to you in the expressions on the faces. The Premise? Lwaxana Troi is on board the Enterprise when Q pays a visit. Let the games begin. I was Sold. And honestly, I don't want to say much more so as not to spoil anything. All you need to know is that these two massive egos meet and inevitably clash, with Picard and the crew caught in the middle.

Beyond that, do yourself a favor and find out for yourself. Peter David is an excellent Trek author, whether TOS or TNG, he had a great grasp of the characters best natures, and could write them both seriously and comedically. The interplay would have made for a fantastic episode, and in fact he told me that both John DeLancie and Majel Barrett wanted to and begged the studio, but were denied for unknown reasons. Given that the studio did accept unsolicited scripts, hopefully it was just a budget

issue and not that a primarily comic book author had delivered a better story than anything in the first 2 seasons. Whats great is that it is entertaining, lighthearted, and a fun ride with everyone you already love, or love to hate. Its not dulled down by too much technobabble, or too serious a lesson to be learned. It does carry a bit of life lessons if you want them, but nothing heavy handed. A great book for a quick light read, at which point, the expressions on the artwork will have new meaning.

A final note from Mr. David, I have yet to listen to it, but he did say if you can find the audiobook, it was read by both John DeLancie, and Majel Barrett, adding their fun and talent to the read.





A collection of fashion items including a black dress with a ruffled collar, a black jacket with a scale-like texture, a pair of black gloves, a pair of black boots, a black belt with a silver buckle, a silver chain belt, a silver bag, and a pair of black boots.

A thrifted belt with silver toggle style buckle adds to this warrior look. A belt pouch is added, made from the inside pocket of a faux leather pewter purse/tote. The attached strap was cut and folded down, fastened with office supply two prong brads. The resulting loops of strap hold pouch onto belt.

To Be Continued in the Next Issue of Athena's Tablet.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Blood Cancer United Light The Night

by Specialist
Teena Haskins
Godwin

I met with fellow Athena members, Kathy and Ryan, and we walked the short distance to the park. When we first got to the park, we went through a security check and then signed in. While there, we picked up our lanterns. The lanterns are symbolic: The red is for supporters, the yellow is in honor or in memory of, and the white lanterns are for survivors. We listened to the dedications and announcements and learned the history of Blood Cancer United and stories of how cancer had affected some of the speakers and their families.

After the welcome announcements, there was an order to dim the field lights. After that, we were instructed to turn the lanterns on and to raise them in order. The survivors were told to move to the center of the grouping and hold up their white lanterns. It's always a very moving part of the ceremony.

And until you see how many lives cancer has touched, you can't comprehend what it's like. The lantern ceremony demonstrates a very small part of people affected.

After the lantern ceremony, we walked around the track until it was time to take our seats for the fireworks. It's always a special treat and a great way to end the night.

There are many types of cancer, and there are many types of



Specialist Teena Haskins Godwin, Fleet Captain Kathy Peck, and Commander Ryan Peck

blood cancer. Leukemia is very personal for Kathy, being the illness that took her brother Billy much too young. It was in his honor we walked.

That made me realize how lucky I am to have survived cancer.

In 1984, I was almost 10 years old when I was diagnosed with Leukemia. We had a great family doctor who recognized some of my symptoms and steered my mother to contact Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville. There, I was officially diagnosed with Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia. I spent almost two weeks in the hospital, being tested and prepped for what was to be the next 2+ years of my life.

I ended up having surgery to insert a Broviac catheter that went into my chest to deliver the chemotherapy medication as

efficiently as possible, since my illness and young age caused my veins to be uncooperative. Luckily I didn't need to have radiation, but I went through two years of IV and oral chemotherapy. I was told I'd be sickly and have frequent hospital stays. The docs also said my growth may even be stunted. I grew up to be 5'9" so I think I'm okay with being stunted.

Technically, I've been in remission for 40 years. I was diagnosed early and given a 95-98% chance of a complete recovery.

Cancer research is still a very important part of working to eliminate all cancer, so no one has to experience it or witness the effects on a friend or loved one.

Blood Cancer United is and has been the leading organization for everyone affected by blood cancer since 1949.

The total amount raised was \$918,442.00 with \$470 being donated by Team Billy.

In memory of those who have passed. In honor of the fighters, the survivors and their families. And in awe of medical personnel, researchers, businesses and those individuals who help in any way to try to put an end to cancer.

Here's to 40 more years cancer-free for me, with the goal to completely eradicate all types of cancer in the (hopefully) near future.

So we can all...
Live Long and Prosper.



IDIC Dinner

by Commander Ryan Spero Peck

One thing that is for certain, USS Athena members love to socialize and eat! Feisty feta dip, pita, pastitsio, baked chicken, and gyros were some of the delectables that we enjoyed at the Grecian Family Restaurant. Nestled in Spring Hill, Tennessee, we spent the better part of the evening catching up with each other and talking Trek.



PMarie was the first one to pipe up and say that she wanted to start out with spanakopita, a savory pastry that is made with delicate, paper-thin sheets of phyllo dough, feta cheese, and spinach that is baked to a golden, crunchy perfection. The appetizer platter included this and more.

Restaurant owner Frank Georgalos came out and mingled with members towards the end of our meal.



This restaurant is not only known for its authentic Greek dishes, but also for the incredible variety of homemade desserts. Baklava

and Athenian chocolate mousse were instant favorites!

What are some of the Hellenic cultural notes that intersect with Star Trek? On the original series episode "Who Mourns for Adonais?", the *Enterprise* is captured by an alien claiming to be the Greek god of the sun, Apollo. He claims

that he and others (Zeus, Athena, Aphrodite, Hermes, Hera, and Artemis) were a "gallant band of travelers" who visited Earth some five thousand years ago. Apollo intended to make Carolyn Palamas his queen and the



mother of a new race of godlike beings.

Also, actress Marina Sirtis claims Greek ancestry since her parents were from the island of Cyprus. In 2024 she was presented with a Saturn Lifetime Achievement Award for her role on *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.



In fact, the USS Athena was named in tribute to the goddess Athena, who's statue is inside the Parthenon in Nashville's Centennial Park. It is a full-scale replica of the original structure found in Athens, Greece.



DECK 8 FOOD AND BEVERAGE PREPARATION FACILITIES

CAPTAIN PIKES BBQ BABY BACK RIBS!

by Crewman
Joe Waltz



We all know that Captain Pike loves to cook for the crew of the U.S.S. Enterprise! Here is my take on what I'm sure would be one of the crew's favorites.

First, start off with a rack of ribs and turn them over bone-side

up. With your finger or the handle of a spoon find where the membrane separates from the meat and get a good grip of the membrane to take it off. This will help the ribs become more tender

Next take your choice of mustard, Worcestershire sauce, or hot sauce and rub both sides of the ribs with it. This is called a binder and it helps your seasoning stick to the ribs. Next, season the ribs with any BBQ rub you like or make it yourself. A very simple and good one is this. The amounts of each spice is up to you.

Salt
Pepper
Onion powder
Garlic powder
Ground mustard
Cayenne pepper (for optional heat)
Brown sugar

Season the ribs heavily. If you have a smoker heat it up to 225F. If you use an oven, use the

same temp. If using an oven I highly recommend that you use a roasting pan with a lid, add a small amount of liquid (any will work), and place ribs in with the lid on. Bake for 6 hours or until your desired tenderness.

For a smoker, place ribs in and smoke for 3 hours or until they are 165F. Next wrap your ribs in aluminum foil. One optional step is when you wrap your ribs, add butter honey and some more BBQ rub. Wrap ribs tightly and place back in smoker meat side down for 2 hours. Take ribs out and open them up, place BBQ sauce on the meat side and put back in the smoker for 1 hour or until desired tenderness. Use your favorite BBQ sauce or make it yourself.

BBQ sauce homemade

Blend 1/2 a white or yellow onion

3 to 5 garlic cloves

1 jalapeño (optional)

add some Worcestershire and hot sauce

Take a medium sized pot add a small amount of veg oil or canola oil (do not use olive oil).

Cook mixture till almost dry then add 2 Oz of tomato paste. Cook until fragrant. Add about 2 cups ketchup, a cup of brown sugar, hot sauce, Worcestershire sauce and your bbq rub to taste. Cook for about 20 min or to the desired thickness you like.

This is just my recipe feel free to add take out or change anything about it that fits your taste and most importantly ENJOY!



STAR-FLEET MEDICAL

A Counselor's Responsibility On A Starship

By Lieutenant JG
Alan Hounshell Medical Officer



What do you really know about the responsibility and role that counselors have aboard starships or space stations? Most of us are familiar with Deanna Troi, Enterprise's primary counselor (ST: TNG). Her Betazoid half allowed her to sense the emotions of others, making her more sensitive to matters that may impact operations and crew morale. There are also other, less famous



counselors aboard ships who provided consultation, therapy, and opinions that also deserve an honorable mention. These include, but are not limited to, Dr. Gabers Migleemo of the USS Cerritos (ST: Lower Decks) and Dr. Hugh Culber (ST: DSC), serving as a Physician and Counselor. Although there are other crew members on ships identified as counselors, their backgrounds are not always in the medical or mental health field. Many of these individuals appear better suited to provide advice to officers and peers on everyday matters or defense and combat strategies.

Regardless of Star Trek's future world being full of wonder, exciting technology, and exploration, dealing with emotions, understanding others, and helping people cope with trauma, depression, anxiety, stress, and other mental health issues are still things that must be dealt with for the welfare of the

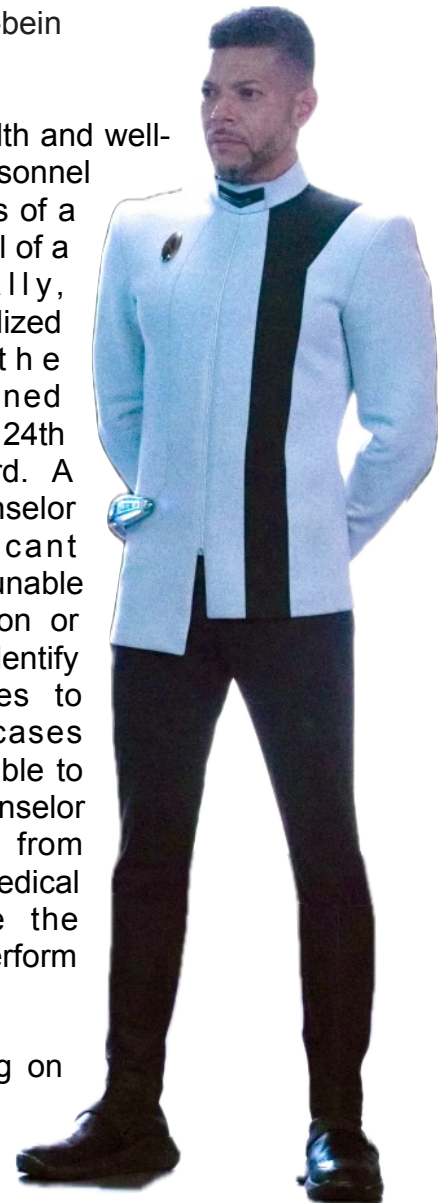
individual and the crew. (Hey, McCoy couldn't fix everything with a pill or hypospray.)

What are the primary responsibilities of a ship's counselor? These include:

- Provide mental health support
- Provide trauma/stress management
- Act as advisor to the captain or commanding officer
- Perform personnel evaluations and duty assessments
- Promote the overall well-being of the crew

Ensuring the mental health and well-being of Federation personnel is critical to the success of a mission or the survival of a crew. Historically, counselors were utilized to provide the responsibilities mentioned above beginning in the 24th century across the board. A skilled, well-trained counselor could make a significant difference for someone unable to function in their position or life, or help someone identify and address their issues to achieve success. In cases where an individual is unable to perform their duties, a counselor can also remove them from duty, just like the Chief Medical Officer, if they believe the individual is unable to perform their duties effectively.

Crew members serving on outposts, starbases, ships constantly had to



deal with death/loss, anxiety, trauma, depression, and other chronic mental health disorders. For example, Lt. Barclay's (*ST: TNG*) issues with self-confidence, fear of transporters, and his neurotic behaviors were addressed with the help of Deanna Troi, who

assisted him in overcoming some of these issues.

Another example is Captain Jean-Luc Picard, who experienced PTSD from his assimilation by the Borg, experiencing trauma and guilt for his actions he could not control. His discussions with Deanna Troi and Guinan helped him

deal with what happened.

However, there are those even in the Star Trek world who are unwilling to seek out a counselor. For example, Miles O'Brien (*ST: TNG* & *ST: DS9*) preferred to seek counsel from his friends rather than a counselor. This probably holds true no matter what century. Being in the mental health field, the success of therapy is dependent on the commitment and motivation of the client to address their issues.

One's environmental exposure further plays a vital role in exacerbating mental health symptoms and increasing the risk of suicide or erratic behavior. Think of living in a space, separated by millions and millions of miles

from your home, dependent on the crew and shelter of a spacecraft or station to provide you with basic needs (oxygen, food, clothing). Loss of life support, temporal anomalies, conspiracies within Starfleet, holodeck malfunctions resulting in a horrible experience, and so much more are just examples of things that could lead to the breakdown of a crew member. Then there is the tremendous amount of stress associated with making contact with other lifeforms who may be aggressive or act in a way that could result in you being harmed. (I'm sure somewhere there is a disorder known as "Red Shirt/Uniform Syndrome" due to the likelihood that someone in engineering or security wearing a red shirt will be more likely to die.) If you were in a command position, you would face the stress of being responsible for hundreds or more people living, dying, or being injured, depending on the decisions you made.

Back here in the 21st century, having been in the mental health field for over 30 years, primarily working with neglected and abused children placed in out-of-home care (residential and therapeutic foster care), the one thing you learn no matter what your area of focus is "therapy can be beneficial for those that seek it and want it." Even though there is a stigma still attached to having a mental health issue and asking for treatment, it has progressively gotten better as more resources have been put in place, and there are more proactive programs to reach out to others, starting before children reach grade school.

If you are experiencing thoughts of suicide, please call 988. If you have a mental health issue that causes distress or impacts the quality of your life, reach out to a therapist. If financial or insurance concerns are stopping you, many free or income-based community services may be able to help you.

Remember, maintaining good mental health makes you happier and more productive. Live well and be well.

Sources of information:

- [Star Trek: Theurgy database](#)
- [Screenrant](#)
- [Gamerant](#)





Atlanta's premiere classic SciFi and Horror Convention

By Commander Ryan Peck

A hot spot for the Georgia Landing Party to gather is Monsterama in Atlanta. Every year the con features Star Trek content and guests. This was a special year since the convention celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of Rod Serling's birth. As you might already know, Gene Roddenberry was friends with Serling, and it was he who encouraged Gene to hire established science fiction writers for his new television series.

My wife (Fleet Captain Kathy Peck) and I presented the panel "The Crossovers of Star Trek and The Twilight Zone" in which we spoke about the actors and creators who were in both series. Yes, there were quite



a few, and interestingly enough, some of the plots between both shows were eerily similar.

Joe Cepeda showed up with his Planet of the Apes costumes that many recognized from his Nature's Hunger Star Trek fan film series, and we even took a picture together at the Nightmare at 20,000 Feet photo booth.

I moderated the "Trek Irregulars" panel, which included the lineup of Stephen Manley (17 year old Spock in TSFS), Beverly Washburn (Lieutenant Galway in TOS), Meredith Hartley (Zarabeth in TOS), and Jerry Sroka (Laxeth in VOY). Each of them told stories about how they were cast and what it was like to be part of the Star Trek phenomenon.

There was a Zombie Prom dance and a Tiki Pool Party complete with an exotic cocktail bar and live music. This is an annual event that we make sure not to miss!



HALLOWEEN HAPPENINGS



HALLOWEEN VIEWING PARTY

By Crewman,
Derek Martin

On October 4th, the Horror, Suspense, SciFi & Fantasy Friends Meetup Group and the USS Athena got together at my home to honor Psycho author Robert Bloch. We watched the Star Trek episode *Wolf in the Fold* which was one of the three original series episodes written by Bloch. We'll watch *Catspaw* and *What Are Little Girls Made Of* at future screenings. We also watched other anthology episodes written or based on a story by Bloch including *A Case of the Stubborns* from *Tales from the Darkside* starring Brent Spiner and Christian Slater, then *The Grim Reaper* from the 1961 TV show *Thriller* starring William Shatner, and finally *The Gloating Place* from *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* starring Marta Kristen from *Lost in Space*. We had a discussion of our favorite Star Trek episodes from the original series. *The Trouble with Tribbles* and *Balance of Terror* got more than one vote. As a fan of Jeffrey Hunter and his Captain Christopher Pike, I named *The Menagerie*.

The meetup group started in 2011, and we've had several Star Trek meetups over the years. The most memorable was in 2015, after Leonard Nimoy's passing, when 30 members came over two nights to watch *Journey to Babel* and *Star Trek: The Voyage Home*. Watching the strained relationship between Spock and Sarek over Spock's decision to join Starfleet in *Journey to Babel* and then watching Sarek utter the words "it is possible that judgment was incorrect" seemed a fitting way to honor Nimoy. Seems hard to believe that 10 years has already gone by since Nimoy passed.



HALLOWEEN PARTY

By Crewman,
Jeremy Manning



On October 19th, our Halloween celebration turned into a full-blown Starfleet gathering with a spooky twist. Hosted by the ever-gracious Miranda Manning, the event welcomed over 20 guests—including members from two Star Trek fan groups, the USS Athena of Starfleet Command and the USS Wernher von Braun of STARFLEET International. The atmosphere was electric, blending fandom pride with festive chaos. Star Trek-themed pumpkin carvings lined the space, glowing with creativity and nods to iconic ships and insignias. The food spread was a hit, offering something for everyone: juicy hamburgers, vegan burgers for our plant-based crew, and a mountain of Halloween candy that kept the sugar levels high and the energy even higher. Costumes ranged from classic monsters to Star Trek officers, with phasers, prosthetics, and spooky flair on full display. It was a visual feast of fandom and fright, with guests fully embracing the spirit of the season.



The party also doubled as a birthday celebration for Jeremy Manning, adding an extra layer of joy to the evening. Between the laughter, the costume admiration, and the shared stories from across the galaxy, it was clear—this was more than just a party. It was a community coming together to celebrate creativity, connection, and a love for all things weird and wonderful. Everyone had an amazing time, and plans are already underway to make next year's event even bigger and bolder.



I'm not crying, you're crying

Thoughts on Episode 2, Season 4, TNG, *Family*

By Science Crewman,
John Sestito

STAR TREK
THE NEXT GENERATION

EPISODE REVIEW

My childhood was peppered with Next Generation episodes and reruns. I remember sinking deeper into my bean bag chair (still cool) at nearly any point in the day to enjoy the comfort of careening through interstellar space, meeting new, almost always humanoid, species in strange worlds, and accepting the fact that not all planets are habitable... but it makes for a MUCH easier writing process.

Tense moments for sure, but that anxiety of a cliffhanger, or seeing the crew in some improbable mess in which the prime directive and personal feelings are at odds with each other never truly affected my viewership. The reason? Jean-Luc at the helm.

Picard is a titan. Stoic, intelligent, emotionally regulated, and purely fueled by recurrent cups of Earl Grey. When I think of a captain, I think of Picard. He is neither rash nor petty. All that he does is calculated, and regardless of the situation or circumstance, his demeanor remains the same. This is his greatest asset. He wields with a cool, calm, and collected mind sharpened by years of experience and a treasure trove of Shakespearian references.



Family is a pinnacle moment in Picard's character development and an absolute showcase of Patrick

Stewart's indelible grip on the human condition through his acting prowess.

Spoilers ahead... though, not sure a warning is necessary with this audience.

Family is an episode highlighting the aftermath of this crew's first experience with the Borg (truly the most terrifying villain I have ever read about or watched). Family is the simple name. The content, much more complex.

The main story follows Picard as he decides to visit his brother Robert at their family vineyard. We learn very quickly that the relationship between the two brothers is steeped in historical strain mostly stemming from Jean-Luc's decision to join Starfleet and move away from the family business.

This theme plays throughout the episode, somewhat mirrored in a visit from Worf's parents, and Beverly's discovery of Jack Crusher's personal items. Survivor's guilt



blatantly visible throughout each moment of the episode. My focus though, is Picard. Jean-Luc and Robert trade shot for shot throughout the vineyard scenes on all issues, exacerbated by pieces of dialogue such as Marie (Robert's wife) informing Picard that the mayor wanted to have a parade in his favor, or Robert's criticism of Jean-Luc's degrading palate due to years of synthehol. An even bigger strain; Rene (Picard's "uncle") clearly admires Jean-Luc and his well-known achievements. Robert is well aware of the adoration and does not want his son to follow in

Jean-Luc's footsteps. Despite Robert's efforts, Rene remains undeterred in viewing Jean-Luc as a never-ending source of aspiration.

An old friend of Jean-Luc's pays a visit to the vineyard with the intentions of offering Jean-Luc a director position for the New Atlantis Project, an effort to create a subcontinent on the mid-Atlantic Ridge. The offer symbolized, but also quite literally, a return to Earth and a chance to revert the decision he made long ago to leave his family on Earth. It was a chance to set things straight with his family, to resolve all that remained bitter, hurt, and left behind. The crew however, had inadvertently become his second family through sheer time spent together, tragedies they've endured, and triumphs to look forward to. And so, in the midst of survivor's guilt, he is faced with yet another gut-wrenching decision fueled by even more guilt. He considers it... but the show must go on. So, for a second time, Picard chooses the Enterprise.

Bickering spattered throughout the episode but the crescendo begins as Jean-Luc walks out on Robert, who continues to pester Jean-Luc with reminders of his past and jealous induced comments. The argument continues into the fields as Robert tries to break down Jean-Luc's resolve. It works. Robert receives a punch in the face, courtesy of that balding, tea drinking, thespian that I admire so much.

After some good ol' brother to brother rough housing, they laugh nervously. The laughter from Picard becomes desperate, seamlessly transitioning to a racking, uncontrollable sob in which he fully comes to term with all that pains him.

Captain Jean-Luc Picard: *You don't know, Robert. You don't know... They took everything I was. They used me to kill and to destroy and I couldn't. stop them.*



Captain Jean-Luc Picard: *I should have been able to stop them. I tried... I tried so hard. But I wasn't strong enough! I wasn't good enough! I should have been able to stop them, I should've, I should...!*

Robert Picard: *So - my brother is a human being after all. This is going to be with you a long time, Jean-Luc. A long time. You have to learn to live with it. You have a simple choice now: live with it below the sea with Louis - or above the clouds with the Enterprise. [they help each other up from the ground]*

Captain Jean-Luc Picard: *You know, I think you were right, after all. I think I did come back so that you could help me.*



Robert Picard: *Yeah... Do you know what? I still don't like you, Jean-Luc*

The denouement. A rare, unraveling of Jean-Luc's complicated emotions haunted by the past and a

humanizing moment that simultaneously proved to the viewers and to Robert that Jean-Luc is subject to the same trials and tribulations of the human condition that we all face. His stoicism and calm demeanor even more impressive after witnessing the range of emotions, a spectrum he kept stowed away for the majority of the series to that point. The weight of the crew, the burden of survivor's guilt, his past decisions that continue to plague him... Jean-Luc impresses and commands to the utmost efficiency despite all of it. He hides it all to retain the fortified front that we all know and love. The enterprise, his raison d'être. Perhaps though, it is necessary to see this side of him.

This episode remains a favorite of mine to this day. Jean-Luc is an enigma, his depths rarely explored. Here, we're offered a sobering glimpse.

"It is possible to commit no mistakes and still lose."



DRAGON CON EXPERIENCE

*By Fleet Captain
Kathy Peck Commanding Officer, USS Athena*

Who wants to attend Nerdi-Gras in the South, in the middle of summer, with eighty-thousand of their closest friends? Fleet Captain Kathy Peck and Commander Ryan Peck do it every year! Dragon Con was Labor Day weekend, August 28 through September 1, 2025 in Atlanta, GA. Encompassing five host hotels and two other buildings in downtown Atlanta, it is the largest fan-run pop culture convention in the United States. I have been attending since 1991, and I have watched it grow from one hotel into the behemoth that it is today. The con schedule is so loaded with activities that you can never do everything you want to do, so it's always a pick-and-choose situation. While the con has many guests (actors, writers, artists) who are known for various roles in sci-fi/fantasy/pop culture, I have always mainly focused on the Star Trek guests. The category of Star Trek programming is called the "Trek Track" and is filled with a wide variety of Trek-related panels and activities.

The Trek celebrity guests this year were, to name a few, William Shatner, Brent Spiner, Gates McFadden, John de Lancie, Robert Duncan

McNeill, Tim Russ, Robert Picardo, Christopher Lloyd, and Simon Pegg. Garrett Wang was the Trek Track director, in addition to being a guest, making it even more special. They all did Q&A panels,

autographs, and photo ops. I attended a few of their panels. It was great seeing the Voyager actors on stage together. Their banter is always the best. Garrett Wang talked about the badge-tossing game that he invented that they used to do when filming, much to the director's chagrin. The TNG panel was also fun.

Gates McFadden talked about how she used to pose her Dr. Crusher action figure in strange positions.

But Dragon Con, being different from corporate cons, has so much more to offer besides celebrities. My husband, Commander Ryan Peck, and I presented our own panels. We led the "Walking Tour of All Things Trek at Dragon Con" on Friday, right after the Trek Track opening ceremony. This was our third year in a row doing the Trek



USS Athena members at Star Trek photoshoot:

Specialist Buck Melton, Lt. Lois Jolly, Recruit Carrie Williams, Commander Ryan Peck, Fleet Captain Kathy Peck, Recruit Miranda Manning, Recruit Jeremy Manning, Recruit Lisa Boswell, Recruit Joe Waltz

walking tour. The tour involved leading everyone around all five hotels and other buildings and telling them where all the Star Trek programming was throughout the con. You see, there were so many Trek things on the schedule that it wasn't all limited to the Trek Track room at the Hilton. If you looked closely, there was something Star Trek-related in each building. It may have been a celebrity panel, gaming, a fan activity, etc.

We presented a fan discussion panel called "Klingons: Why Do We Find Them So Fascinating?" Also on the panel with us were Specialist Buck Melton, also of the USS Athena, and Darren Carter of the Klingon Assault Group. It was a deep dive into the Klingon culture and how Klingons were used in Star Trek. Klingons have always been a fan favorite, going all the way back to The Original Series. We had a great discussion with the audience and got some very positive feedback.

Our next panel presentation was "Star Trek: 2000 – What It Was Like to Be a Star Trek Fan in the Year 2000".

We did this one with Nick Wright, one of the Trek Track staff members. It was another fun panel with wonderful audience participation. It was great to reminisce about the state of Trek and fandom twenty-five years ago. (Yeah, for some of us, it's really hard to



USS Athena members in parade:

Fleet Captain Kathy Peck, Specialist Buck Melton,
Commander Ryan Peck, Ensign Eddie Hines,
Recruit Miranda Manning, Specialist Teena Godwin,
Recruit Jeremy Manning

believe the year 2000 was twenty-five years ago!) Trek fandom reached a high point in the 1990s, and remained hugely popular in 2000.

Ryan and I also met other Athena members for dinner at Hsu's Gourmet restaurant on Thursday, the first night of the con. It was a great time to socialize and relax with the other Athenians who attended Dragon Con. The con has so much to do that most people spread out and do their

own things, so we always have a few planned events to make sure we get to see our Athena friends.

Another one of our Dragon Con traditions is the Dragon Con parade Saturday morning. The parade attracts thousands of people, who may or may not be Dragon Con attendees, all gathered along the streets. It's a great way for onlookers to see all the costumes and all the fandoms represented at the con. Ryan and I always lead the Star Trek section. Several Athena members, plus other Trek fans, joined us for the mile-and-a-half walk through



Star Trek section of parade

downtown Atlanta, waving and smiling, and even doing the Vulcan salute. No, the blazing hot sun in Atlanta did not scare us away. Ryan and I wore our Star Trek: Voyager "Burger King" costumes. Yes, some even do the obscure costumes for the parade. The Athena had three Andorians (unsurprisingly, the biggest attention-grabbers) in the parade: Specialist Teena Godwin, Recruit Jeremy Manning, and Recruit Miranda Manning. The parade is always televised on a local Atlanta

station, so of course, we all made sure we were the best possible Trekkies we could be!

Group photoshoots are widely attended at the con. They are scheduled throughout all the days of the con, in many fandoms, such as Stargate, Star Wars, music icons, Superman, and just about anything imaginable. So, of course, there is an annual one for Star Trek.



USS Athena members at dinner:

Specialist Buck Melton, Recruit Lisa Boswell, Recruit Joe Waltz, Fleet Captain Kathy Peck, Commander Ryan Peck, Recruit Carrie Williams, Lt. Lois Jolly, Recruit Kat Stewart

Again, we attended with several other Athena members and hundreds of other Trek fans. Anyone can attend in costume, or just to watch or take pictures. Everyone in costume posed all at once for a large group shot, then we were divided up into different categories, such as each Trek series, each type of uniform, aliens, and villains. There was so much creativity that went into the costumes. How impressive it was to see a Kai Winn (Recruit Miranda Manning), a Riker with trombone (Lt. Lois Jolly), an Andorian (Specialist Teena Godwin), or an Enterprise Section 31 agent (Specialist Buck Melton). Dragon Con is mostly known for its fabulous cosplayers, and the group photoshoots are a great way to see them all on display.

This con attracts people from all over the United States--in fact, all over the world. It is the apex of fandom and geekdom. There are enough Star



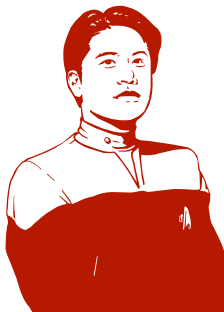
USS Athena presented the panel "Klingons: Why Do We Find Them So Fascinating?":

Recruit Darren Carter, Specialist Buck Melton, Fleet Captain Kathy Peck, Commander Ryan Peck

Trek celebrities and activities every year that the Trek programming is its own con within a con. Sure, it's insanely crowded. Sure, there are long lines for the celebrities. But it's all worth it for a con experience like no other!



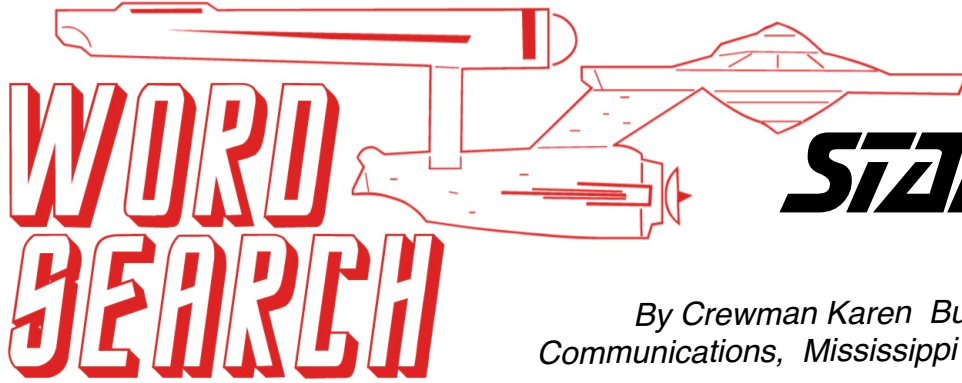
Recruit
Miranda Manning
as Kai Winn



Corporal Lezlie Sawyer

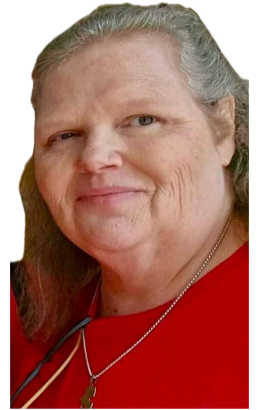


Lt. J.G. Stephen Willis



STAR TREK

By Crewman Karen Burcham
Communications, Mississippi Landing Party



"Space: the final frontier. These are the voyages of the starship Enterprise. Its five-year mission: to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no man has gone before." This monologue is spoken by Captain James T. Kirk, played by William Shatner.

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MONOLOGUE
 CIVILIZATIONS
 WORLDS
 BOLDLY
 SPACE
 FRONTIER
 BEFORE
 ENTERPRISE
 SPOKEN
 SHATNER
 GONE
 CAPTAIN
 SEEK
 LIFE
 STARSHIP
 VOYAGES
 STRANGE
 KIRK
 MISSION
 EXPLORE



LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

by Chief Petty Officer Jose Cepeda



USS Athena members had an exciting and fun filled weekend filming selected scenes for the Star Trek fan film "Captain Simian's First Command" in Nashville, Tennessee on Saturday, September 27, 2025. The film produced by Joe Cepeda from Nature's Hunger is about an ape that has a dream of becoming a Starship Captain.



Enthusiastic members brought their acting mojo, costumes, and makeup kits to the filming event.

Lezlie Sawyer and Darren Carter are also members of the Athena and recorded their scenes earlier.



After a long day of filming, members enjoyed dinner and fellowship at The Eastern Peak Asian restaurant.

The film is planned for a release in December 2025.



Athena members in attendance: Chief Petty Officer Jose Cepeda (producer, director, writer), Fleet Captain Kathy Peck, Commander Ryan Peck, Specialist Teena Godwin, Petty Officer Loretta Augustine, Recruit Loretta Tobias, Private Don Tobias, Jr., Lt. Commander Phil Barnes (Commander Starbase 01), Specialist Sandra Brown, Lt. JG Pam Maness, Recruit John Sestito.



Upcoming Events

Saturday, December 6
USS Athena Christmas Party

January 2026
Georgia Landing Party Meetup

Saturday, January 17, 2026
Starfleet Academy Viewing Party

Saturday, February 7, 2026
IDIC Dinner

Saturday, March 14, 2026
Miles O'Brien Day Celebration

Some members of the USS Athena are also involved in these groups, check them out at your convenience.



StarPodTrek is the exciting podcast produced by Kavura and Nayr. Each episode delves into past issues of Starlog magazine and discusses pertinent information of that time period. Tune into the show wherever you listen to podcasts!

<https://starpodlogpodcast.blogspot.com/>



Middle Tennessee Space Society is the local chapter of the National Space Society and is dedicated to the creation of a spacefaring civilization. NSS is an independent nonprofit, nonpartisan educational membership organization.



Adventure Science Center For 80 years, Adventure Science Center has been bringing science to life for students, teachers, and families in Middle Tennessee and across the U.S.

<https://www.adventuresci.org/>



The Barnard-Seyfert Astronomical Society Experienced members of BSAS or guest speakers talk about some aspect of astronomy or observing in Nashville once a month. Often the public star parties are centered around a special astronomical event, such as a lunar eclipse, or meteor showers.

<https://www.bsasnashville.com/>



Star Trek: Nature's Hunger is a fan film series that is written and produced by Jose Cepeda. Follow the adventure on YouTube!

<https://youtube.com/@natureshunger>